## Short Biography

Maulaanaa Sayyidd Muhammadd Yoosuf Bannuree R.A. was born on the 6th Rabiuth Thani 1326 in the village of *Mahabatabad* near the railway station of Rashkay in the District of Mardan, West Pakistan.

He received his primary education and learnt the recital of the Qur'aan Kareem at home (Ghari Meer Ahmed Shah, Peshawar') from his father and maternal uncle Maulana Fadhl Hamdan Banuri. He learned the basics of Sarf, Nahw and Mantiq from Maulana Abdullah Peshawari. He then went to Kabul where he studied Fiqh, Usul Fiqh, Mantiq, and Ma'aani etc. from the Qudhi ul Qudhat, Moulana Abdul Qadeer, Maulana Saieli Qaleeghawi and other well-versed Asaatiza. For higher education, he went to Darul Uloom, Deoband in 1345 and completed his education there in two years. He studied Dorah Hadith in Dabhel under the great Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri R.A., Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Uthmani R.A. and other great-learned scholars.

After graduation, he stayed for quite some time in the company and service of the learned Shaikh Maulana Anwar Shah Kashmiri R.A. and was his special and close attendant. He benefited tremendously from Shah Saheb. At that time on the wish and insistence of his father, he participated in the Molvi Fadhil examinations at the Punjab University and attained first position, though he disliked this examination, in spite of having time to prepare for it. He then lived for a few years in his home town of Peshawar, and began diligently teaching in Madrasah Rafiul Islam, Baanah Maar'i (The principal of this Madrasah was his maternal uncle Maulana Fadhl Hamdan Banuri R.A.) I was at that time studying Dorah Hadith in Darul Uloom, Deoband. In 1352 (1934 A.D.) when Maulana Anwar Shah Saheb passed away, Maulana Yoosuf Banuri came to pay his respects and after staying for a few days returned. Thereafter he was approached by the authorities of Dabhel to teach there, and he accepted the offer.

He was appointed to teach Kitaabs on Hadith. His acceptance amongst the students can be gauged from the following incident: Once there arose the question as to who should teach the Tirmizi Shareef. At that time, there were three great Asaatiza of Hadith at the Dabhel Madrasah.

1. Maulana Abdur-Rahman Amrohi.
2. Maulana Muhammad Badre Aalam, and
3. Maulana Yousuf Banuri.

It was decided that the students also be consulted in this matter. As a result, Moulana Yousuf Banuri received 27 votes and the other two Ustaad, 7 and 3 respectively.

Marhum Moulana remained the Shaykhul Hadith at Dabhel until the creation of Pakistan and thereafter, at the invitation of the elders at Darul Uloom, Tando Allah Yar, went there. After remaining there for several years he came to Karachi and laid the foundation of' the Madrasah Arabiyyah Islamiyyah, Newtown. Karachi.

Before coming to Dabhel, he was Director General of the Jamiatul Ulama – Frontier Province and took an active part in politics. He took interest in politics while at Dabhel too. After the creation of Pakistan, he abstained completely from politics and spent all his time in education and the spiritual and social upliftment of the Ummah. Alhamdulilah, he had great respect and continued to keep his contacts with the elders of Deoband. During his first Hajj (after which he went to Egypt to supervise the printing of the *Faydhul Baari* and 'Nasbur Raayah') he took the Bay'ah at the hand of Moulana Shafi'uddin Naginwi Makki (who was the Majaaz of Haji Imdadullah R.A.) Moulana Naginwi RA said that there are two great personalities in India, from whomever you wish, seek and attain benefit. The first is Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi R.A. and the other is Moulana Husayn Ahmed Madani R.A. Moulana Yousuf Saheb was more inclined towards Moulana Husayn Ahmed Madani R.A.Moulana Yousuf Banuri R.A. stayed for ten months in Cairo. During his stay there, he wrote many articles on Deoband and its elders for the Egyptian journals and periodicals. During that period, Allama Zahid Al-Kowthari was also living there. Marhum Moulana had a close association with him and benefited greatly from his knowledge. He also introduced the elders of Deoband and their educational works to him. As a result, Shaykh Kowthari requested Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi to grant him permission on his Sanad of Hadith, which Moulana Thanwi kindly did.

When Marhum Moulana Yousuf Saheb returned from Egypt he went to visit Moulana Ashraf Ali Thanwi R.A., who became very impressed with him. Later, Moulana Thanwi R.A. included him in his Majaazeene Suhbat.

It was my practice, after graduation, to go to Deoband every year in Sha'baan to participate in the Bukhari Khatam there. Moulana had just returned from Egypt when I was deciding to go to Deoband. He gave me a letter for Moulana Husayn Ahmed Madani R.A., wherein he stated his desire to make Bay'ah at his hands, and requested me to personally hand it to him and bring back the reply. I reached Deoband and delivered the letter to Moulana Madani RA. He replied: 'His matter of Bay'ah is with Moulana Thanwi, and how can.1 repeat it?' I explained the situation to him whereupon he replied: 'When you have time remind me'. (During that time, Moulana was busily occupied in teaching the Bukhari Shareef day and night) On the 29th Sha'baan at half past two at night he completed the Bukhari Shareef. Immediately thereafter, he left for Saharanpur to go to Sylhet. I accompanied him till Saharanpur and reminded him of the answer to the letter. He immediately wrote a reply on the station platform and gave it to me. I delivered the reply to Moulana Yousuf Banuri. The letter was published some months ago in the 'Bayyinaat' monthly.

Marhum Moulana had a special proficiency and intellect for writing. He possessed a unique style, and wrote easily without tiring on every subject. At times after writing, he did not re-read the article. Moulana was more proficient in Arabic than Urdu. Besides

the ‘Basaa’ir wa Ibar’ in the monthly ‘Bayyinaat’ and a few Urdu articles, all his literary compositions were in Arabic. (He was a member of the Majma’ul ilmi Al-Arabi of Damascus). These are some of his main works:
1. Ma’aarifu-s-Sunan, commentary on Tirmizi in 6 volumes.
2. Awaarifu-l-Minan, introduction to Ma’aarifu-s-Sunan (not printed)
3. Bughiyatul Areeb fee Ahkaamu-l-Qibblah wa-l-Mahaareeb.
4. Nafhatul Ambar fee Hayaatu-s-Shaikh Anwar Shaah Kashmeeree (R’A)
5. Yateematul Bayaan fi Shai’im-min ‘Uloomi-l-Qur’aan. He wrote introduction for the following books: Faydhu-l-Baaree, Nasbu-r-Rawyah, Abaqawt, ‘Aqeedatu-l-Islaam, Maqawlaat Kawtharee, etc. etc.
Marhum Maulana was very courageous and spoke the Haqq. He put forward his outspoken views without fear or hesitation during the reign of every government, saying that one should only fear Allah the Almighty. The *Basaw’ir wa Ibar* of the Bayyinaat are a clear testimony to his frankness in expressing the truth.
May Allah Most High shower him with His abundant blessings, Aameen.

## EXCERPTS

(Translator's introduction: Below is a translation of a preface by 'Allamah Sayyidd Muhammadd Yoosuf Binnoree to a book entitled Maslaki-Ulamaa-i-Deoband. The original book—by Qawree Muhammadd Tawyyibb, the then rector of Daaru-l-'Uloom Deoband—is an important piece of work that sheds much needed clarity on the track of Deoband in relation to a range of issues, especially Fiqqh, 'Aqeedah and Tasawwuf. The impetus behind this book was the manner in which the maslak of Deoband was being muddied by certain quarters and viewpoints presented as being Deobandee. A translation of the preface to this work has been rendered into English with hope that individuals will seriously and sincerely research the maslak of Deoband. The purpose of this piece of writing is calling a spade a spade. The ideology of Deoband is clearly defined and has been expounded on; there is no need to package other ideas as being that of Deoband.)

### Preface

With the Name of Allaah, the All-Merciful, the Very Merciful

All praise is for Allah and He is sufficient, and peace on His servants who He selected, especially on our Master Muhammad the Chosen One, his family and his Companions as much as suffices. Thereafter:

These days are the time of *fitnah* and the largest *fitnah* is that truth and falsehood are being mixed in such a way that the mind is left perplexed, rather efforts are underway to present falsehood in the form of the truth. The general masses are either uninformed or without knowledge or have their own motives; because of this they are supporting falsehood and giving more air to the *fitnahs.* In the early days, the [Colonial] British government, through its famous political diplomacy, had carved the name Wahhabi to bring into disrepute the *ekders* of Daaru-l'Uloom Deoband and the *maslak* to destroy that spirit of Jihad which had been born in people through Mawlana Isma'eel Shaheedd, Sayyid Ahmad Shaheedd and the elders of Deoband in 1857.[1] This was publicised through various means. Unfortunately, some famous people of knowledge were also used as instruments in this on account of which a wide gulf came between the *'ulama* of Islam and an opportunity was found to ruin the mind-set of the general masses to such an extent that the *maslak* of the people of truth (*haqq*) fell into serious doubt.

The *maslak* of the elders of Deoband has always remained that on which Imaam-i-Rawbbani Mujaddidd Alfi-Thani, Shaah Waliyullaah Dihlawee and Shah 'Abdu-l-'Azeez were in that after Hadeeth with view of the importance of *Fiqqh* and *ijjtihaadd*, the *Faqeeh* of the Ummah Imam Abu Haneefah is accepted as *imam* and simultaneously the knowledge of the people of the hearts, the sciences of Tasawwuf and the sciences of purifying hearts is correctly blended; and if on the one side there is an acceptance of the great worth of Ibn Taymiyyah then, on the other, there is an admission of the achievements of Shaykh-i-Akbar Muhy al-Din Ibn 'Arabi.

With the *Taqqleedd* and following of Imam Abu Haneefah, by gathering both the Prophetic Ahadeeth and the sciences of the Sufis, a beautiful, effective and heart penetrating *maslak* has appeared. It's very name is the *maslak* of the School of Thought of Deoband. However, unfortunately, new *fitnahs* are being born each day and this has created such a storm that the *maslak* has been brought into disrepute. Now, on the political level those very policies are being employed that were selected in the previous British rule. There is crookedness and err in the hearts of people with motives. The general masses are ignorant and not versed in the faith, and on the other side there is a severe effect of wrong and inaccurate propaganda, as a result of which there is serious fear that falsehood appears in the name of truth and truth in the name of falsehood. There was a need to publicise this, for there to be clarity and for the *maslak* of the people of truth to be clarified. In relation to this, an article had been published by Mawlana Qari Muhammad Tayyab, the grandson of Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi and rector at Dar al-'Ulum Deoband, which was sufficient for this purpose. There was no need to write anything else. However, it had become lost and there was a need to publish it once again. Because of this, those who are publishing it once again and fulfilling a religious need very well are deservingly in need of our thanks. It has been compiled with excellent research and academic insight and justice. It is hoped that those who are just will value it and it will be a beacon of light for those who do not know.

Accordance and guidance is with Allah Most High, He is sufficient for us and the best support.

Sayyidd Muhammadd Yoosuf Binnoree (may he be forgiven)

Karachi 5, 21 Jumada al-Ukhra, 1395AH

2 points to note here, the reference to Jihad here is the struggle for legitimate self-determination against oppressive colonial rule, not the murderous zealotry and wanton destruction in the name of our faith that has become the norm in some parts of the globe today and which has, at times, been nurtured by governments for political reasons. Secondly, the negative reference to the British here should be contextualised to the manner in which British colonial administrators and the East India Company exploited united India and oppressed its people. The British Raj was a ruthless affair and had little empathy for Indians. India, under the British Raj, suffered several famines: 1770, 1783, 1866, 1873, 1892, 1897 and lastly 1943-44. In the first famine, approximately 10 million people died in Bengal alone, wiping out one third of Bengal's population. During the famine of 1943, when three million people died in just Bengal, people resorted to eating grass and human flesh to survive. Winston Churchill, the then prime minister of the UK, was callous in his reactions. "Famine or no famine, Indians will breed like rabbits," he said. This left a sour feeling in the

hearts of many of the Raj's Indian subjects and it was this very feeling that spurred a string of South Asians—Muslim and otherwise—to condemn the British and struggle for self-determination, including Dadabhai Naoroji, Abul Kalam Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Muhammadd 'Alee Jinnah, and many stalwarts of Daaru-l-'Uloom Deoband. These anticolonial efforts were for a particular time and place that has now passed.

(‘*Aqeedah Nuzoolu-l-Maseeh (‘A),* p.25-26)

When stating the necessary fundamentals of Islamic belief, scholars of the *ummah* usually mention a few examples in their books. A misunderstanding that occurs in the minds of some readers is that they think the necessary fundamentals are limited to just these examples and there is nothing more. This is even though the intent of these scholars is to merely present a few examples, not to shorten, restrict or limit [the necessary fundamentals]. To remove this misunderstanding, we have compiled [a list of] some of the fundamentals of religion in one place which can be obtained by cursory effort. From this concise list it will become self-evident that the purpose [of the scholars] was to show examples. The purpose was not to compile a complete list.

The examples below can be found in the books of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), *usul al-fiqh*(principles of Islamic jurisprudence), *kalam* (theology) and *usul al-hadith* (principles of *hadith*).

[It is necessary for a believer to affirm the following:]

(1) Knowledge of Allah Most High,
(2) His ambient power (qudrah),
(3) His perfect will,
(4) His attribute of speech (kalam),
(5) The Qur’an,
(6) Qur’an is preeternally existent,
(7) Attributes of Allah are preeternal,
(8) Universe is originated (hadith),
(9) Resurrection of the physical body [not just the soul],
(10) Punishment of the grave,
(11) Reward and punishment in the hereafter,
(12) The beatific vision of Allah in the hereafter,
(13) The great intercession,
(14) Existence of the pool of Al-Kawthar,
(15) Existence of Angels,
(16) Existence of the two angels known as the honorable recorders (kiraman katibin),
(17) Finality of the Prophethood,
(18) Belief that Prophethood is gifted and not acquired,
(19) Prohibition of uttering obscenities against the Companions (muhajirin or ansar),
(20) Love for Ahl al-Bayt,
(21) Caliphate of Shaykhayn (Abu Bakr and ‘Umar – May Allah be pleased with them both),
(22) Obligation of the five salahs,
(23) Number of rak’ahs in salah,
(24) Number of prostrations in salah,
(25) Fasts of Ramadan,
(26) Zakah,
(27) Measurements used for calculating zakah,
(28) Hajj,
(29) The stay in Arafat [during Hajj],
(30) Number of circumambulations [of the Ka’bah] in tawaf,
(31) Jihad,
(32) Facing the Ka’bah in salah,
(33) Friday salah,
(34) Congregational salah,
(35) Adhan,
(36) The two ‘Ids,
(37) Permissibility of wiping over leather socks [in wudu],
(38) Prohibition of abusing any of the Prophets,
(39) Prohibition of abusing Shaykhawyn,
(40) Rejection of jism (body) for Allah,
(41) Rejection of divine indwelling (hulul),
(42) Prohibition of considering unmarriageable kin (mahrams) permissible [for marriage],
(43) Stoning (rajm) of the adulterer,
(44) Prohibition of [wearing] silk for men,
(45) Permissibility of buying and selling,
(46) Bathing after ritual impurity,

(47) Prohibition of marrying one's mother,
(48) Prohibition of marrying one's daughters,
(49) Prohibition of marrying one's mahrams,
(50) Prohibition of alcohol and
(51) Prohibition of gambling.

At this time 51 examples have been presented and from this it must have occurred to the reader that some matters towards which one hardly pays attention are also part of the fundamentals of religion.

Now, at the end of this discussion we will present a statement of *Muhaqqiq al-Hind* Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dahlawi (may Allah have mercy on him). The entire statement can be found in *Ikfar al-Mulhidin* [of Imam Anwar Shah Kashmiri]. The general rule regarding the fundamentals of religion will become lucid after this [statement] *insha'Allah* …

Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz al-Dahlawi said: "Fundamentals of religion are of three types.

(1) The first type is that which is proven from clear verses of the Qur'an such as the prohibition of marriage with one's own mother or daughter.

(2) The second type is that which is proven from *al-sunnah al-mutawatirah* (mass-transmitted narrations) — regardless if the mass-transmission was in letter or in spirit — in belief or in actions, in *fara'id* (obligatory acts) or in *nawafil* (supererogatory acts).

(3) The third type is that which is established with absolute consensus (*ijma' qat'i*) such as the caliphates of Sayyiduna Abu Bakr al-Siddiq and Sayyiduna 'Umar al-Faruq (may Allah be pleased with them both).

There is no doubt that if one denies any of these [three types] then this person's belief on the Qur'an and the Prophets is not correct."